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CONTACT:

Jessica Schafer, 202-482-5670

press@ntia.doc.gov

**NTIA TO ACCEPT UPDATED GRANT APPLICATIONS FROM STATES FOR BROADBAND
IMPROVEMENT AND MAPPING ACTIVITIES**

*Awardees in NTIA's State Broadband Data and Development Program Have Opportunity to Expand
Efforts to Increase Broadband Access and Adoption*

WASHINGTON – The Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) today announced that state governments and other existing awardees in its State Broadband Data and Development Grant Program may seek funding for various initiatives to help their communities compete in the digital economy and for up to three additional years of broadband mapping work.

“As Congress recognized, many communities are being left behind in the 21st Century economy and need improved broadband access and adoption to compete,” said Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information and NTIA Administrator Lawrence E. Strickling. “Given the growing economic importance of broadband services, better data and strategic planning are needed on the state level. This will help us increase broadband availability and use across the country, which is critical to our global competitiveness.”

Launched in 2009, NTIA's State Broadband Data and Development Grant Program implements the joint purposes of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the Broadband Data Improvement Act (BDIA). One of the primary purposes of the grant program is to assist states in gathering data on the availability, speed, and location of broadband services. The data they compile and display will also be used to create the comprehensive, interactive national broadband map that NTIA is required by the Recovery Act to produce and make publicly available by February 17, 2011. The map, which NTIA plans to update every six months, will assist consumers with better information on the broadband services available to them and inform policymakers' efforts to increase broadband availability nationwide.

To be fiscally prudent, NTIA originally funded state data collection efforts for a two-year period, allowing the agency to assess initial state activities before awarding funding for the remainder of this five-year initiative. With the program well underway, states (or their designees) can now apply for funding under the existing program rules for three additional years of mapping and data collection work. Of significance, states may also seek funding for other activities that support BDIA's goals, including state broadband task forces or advisory boards, technical assistance programs, local or regional technology planning efforts, and programs to promote increased computer ownership and Internet usage.

“Congress gave NTIA the resources to support broadband improvement efforts in the states. We are committed to investing these resources prudently and effectively,” Strickling said. “Now that NTIA has seen initial state data collection efforts, we are prepared to accept and evaluate proposals for additional funding.”

The Recovery Act provided up to \$350 million for implementation of the BDIA and to develop and maintain a broadband inventory map. All 50 states, 5 territories, and the District of Columbia (or their designated entities) are eligible for funding through NTIA’s State Broadband Data and Development Grant Program to support these goals. NTIA has thus far awarded more than \$100 million in grants to 54 of the 56 eligible entities to carry out the first two years of broadband data collection and mapping efforts, and for broadband planning activities. NTIA is directly informing the eligible entities that they may submit amended and supplemental applications until July 1, 2010 for additional broadband improvement and mapping activities.

NTIA serves as the executive branch agency principally responsible for advising the President on communications and information policy. For more information about the NTIA, visit www.ntia.doc.gov.